

fact, the only effect the ban has had was to place more restrictions on honest law-abiding gunowners.

GENETIC INFORMATION AND HEALTH INSURANCE REFORM

HON. LOUISE MCINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 27, 1996

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, health insurance reform is coming to the House floor tomorrow. An important piece of that legislation deals with genetic information and insurance discrimination. Last December, I introduced H.R. 2748, the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination in Health Insurance Act—a bill to prevent the potentially devastating consequences of discrimination based on genetic information.

I am very pleased to learn that both the Republican version of health insurance reform and the Democratic substitute that will be introduced tomorrow contain some of the protections I introduced in my bill last fall.

While the provision in the legislation coming to the floor tomorrow is not as comprehensive as those outlined in my bill, it represents a very important first step in providing protections for people with predisposition to genetic disease.

Let me tell you a little bit about my bill and why it is so important. As chair of the Women's Health Task Force, I closely followed the reports last year indicating that increased funding for breast cancer research had resulted in the discovery of the BRCA1 gene-link to breast cancer. While the obvious benefits of the discovery include potential lifesaving early detection and intervention, the inherent dangers of the improper use of genetic information are just becoming evident.

There is increasing concern that based on genetic information, individuals will be denied access to health care and insurance providers will require genetic screening in order to deny coverage to those who would cause a rise in group premiums.

The lessons we have learned from the past including the disastrous results of discriminating against those genetically predisposed to sickle-cell anemia. More recently, there are cases of people with a family history of breast cancer being afraid of getting tested for fear of losing access to insurance. Both these situations point to the need for comprehensive Federal regulations.

The bill I introduced last December would prevent that type of catastrophe by prohibiting insurance providers from:

First, denying or canceling health insurance coverage, or

Second, varying the terms and conditions of health insurance coverage, on the basis of genetic information.

Third, requesting or requiring an individual to disclose genetic information.

Fourth, disclosing genetic information without prior written consent.

The provisions in the health insurance reform bills to be considered on the floor tomorrow prohibit the use of genetic information as a preexisting condition. I applaud the inclusion of that aspect of my legislation in the insurance reform. I hope that my colleagues and I

can continue to work together to apply the prohibitions on genetic discrimination across the board to cover all insurance policies and to address the important issue of privacy protection.

As therapies are developed to cure genetic diseases, and potentially to save lives, the women and men affected must be assured access to genetic testing and therapy without concern that they will be discriminated against. As legislators, I believe it is our responsibility to ensure that protection against genetic discrimination is guaranteed. Tomorrow we will take the first step in that direction. I invite my colleagues to join me in making the commitment to ensuring comprehensive protections against genetic discrimination.

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF COOPERATION

HON. JAMES A. BARCIA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 27, 1996

Mr. BARCIA. Mr. Speaker, the strength of cooperation is the greatest asset of any entity. I want you to know about the Saginaw Valley Bean and Beet Research Farm which is flush with cooperation, and as a result is proudly celebrating its 25th anniversary of operation this year. This facility, which started operations in 1971, is one of the premier locations in the world for research into matters of concern to sugar beet and dry bean producers and processors.

Michigan Sugar Co. and Monitor Sugar Co. helped to get all of this going by recognizing the importance of ongoing research in the maintenance of a competitive edge. The Michigan Bean Shippers Association, the Michigan Bean Commission, and the Farmers and Manufacturers Beet Sugar Growers Association pushed for creation of a single research farm. Producers helped fund the research by check-off from sales of their commodities, and continue to this day. Today, this facility is a wonderful joint effort of dry bean and sugar beet processors and producers, in cooperation with Michigan State University's Agricultural Experiment Station, the MSU Extension Service, and funding provided through the Cooperate State Research, Education and Extension Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This Federal support has been generously provided with the cooperation of the Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration; and Related Agencies of the House Appropriations Committee.

It is phenomenal to me to think of the fact that 30 years ago farmers earned \$60 million for dry bean crops and \$23 million from sugar beet crops, with yields now having increased by about 80 percent since 1970. New varieties of dry beans have been introduced in the area to take advantage of changing consumer demands for dry bean varieties, particularly for the colored dry bean varieties that are so heavily demanded in other markets around the world. The stable prices that our consumers enjoy for sugar have been enhanced by a research program that is committed to improving yield and maintaining quality in an increasingly competitive market.

Work has been done over the years to improve the hardiness of varieties of beans and

beets. Environmental concerns have been addressed by reviewing the efficacy of pesticides and herbicides as well as application practices. Planting methodology has been studied, ranging from narrow row planting efforts to increase yield per acre, to dealing with concerns created by soil compaction.

Several people deserve credit for this historic endeavor. Loren Armbruster, John Davis, Ernest Flegenheimer, Dr. Milt Erdman, Maurice Frakes, Dale Harpstead, John A. McGill, Jr., Basil McKenzie, Leyton Nelson, Grant Nichol, and Perc Reeve all deserve a major share of the credit for the creation of this facility. Former Congressman Bob Traxler led the efforts to secure Federal funding for this facility. Bob Young, Bill Bortel, Dale Kuenzli, John McGill, Greg Varner, and Dr. Don Christenson now work for the success of this facility. And support for this project continues to come from myself, Congressman CAMP, and Senator LEVIN.

Mr. Speaker, at a time when we want people to look to themselves for solutions to problems, we need to recognize the accomplishments of the Saginaw Valley Bean and Beet Research Farm. I urge you and our colleagues to join me in wishing them the happiest 25th anniversary.

IN MEMORY OF MILLARD LEE BRENT

HON. RALPH M. HALL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 27, 1996

Mr. HALL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege for me to pay tribute today to a legendary educator and outstanding citizen from the Fourth District of Texas—Millard Lee Brent, who died recently at the age of 83. Throughout his life Millard Brent was a prominent and respected figure in Dodd City, and he leaves behind a legacy of accomplishment that will be remembered for years to come.

A native of Dodd City, Millard Brent was born on October 22, 1912, to Ada Finley and Lee William Brent, and devoted much of his life to education. He received a bachelor's degree from Austin College in 1939, a master's degree from East Texas State University in 1951, and was an educator for 46 years. He served as superintendent of Dodd City schools from 1947 to 1962, was superintendent of Fannin County schools from 1962 to 1979, and in 1979 received the Fannin County Teacher of the Year Award. He then served on the board of directors of region 10 on State education from 1979 to 1988.

Millard also devoted much of his time in service to his community and county. He served as president of the Bonham Lions Club and president of the Fort English Society. He served on the board of directors of the American Lung Association of the Dallas area, the Friends of Sam Rayburn Board, the Fannin County Fair Board, the board of the Fannin County Teachers Federal Credit Union, and the Board of Resolution, Conservation and Development. Millard was a member of the Dodd City Masonic Lodge, past Master, 32d degree Mason, Sherman Scottish Rite, and Denison County Commandry, and was an elder of the Dodd City Church of Christ. He received the Texas Historical Commission